UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Farm Service Agency
Washington DC 20250

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<tr><td>**Notice AO-1364**</td></tr>
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For: State and County Offices

<div align="center">

Entering Ballot Information for the 2006 County Committee (COC) Election

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Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Field Operations

[signature]

1   Overview

A   Background

Employees will use the COC Election Website to enter nominee and ballot information. This information is used to create the ballots for this year's election. If a county does not enter and save their ballot information, no ballots will be created for that county. The site has been designed to allow County Offices complete control over the variable information on their ballots. County Offices may enter ballot information for as many local administrative area (LAA) elections as necessary. They are not limited to the 1 or 2 LAA's shown on the COC Election Website as being up for election this year.

County Offices shall enter the eligible COC nominee(s) and ballot information using the submitted FSA-669A(s) as the source of the nominee information.

B   Purpose

This notice:

- reminds County Offices to enter the nominee and ballot information into the COC Election Website

- provides:

  - the date the screens will be available to the County Offices to enter information

  - new instructions and screen prints resulting from the move of the COC/LAA data and eligible to vote flag to the web from the System 36.

Disposal Date	Distribution
January 1, 2007	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

1   Overview (Continued)

C   Contact

If there are questions about this notice, contact either of the following DAFO employees:

- Kenneth Nagel by telephone at 202-720-7890 or e-mail to
  Kenneth.Nagel@wdc.usda.gov

- Deborah Johnson by telephone at 202-720-0067 or e-mail to
  Deborah.Johnson@wdc.usda.gov.

2   County Office Action

A   Updating Nominee Information

Beginning immediately and before the availability of the Ballot Information Screens in the COC Election Website, County Office's shall ensure that:

- each nominee can be located as an **individual** in the Producer Election Data File in the COC Election Website (See Notice AO-1358 for complete instructions on using the Producer Election Data File.)

- the **individual** is flagged eligible to vote and in the correct COC/LAA in the Producer Election Data File

- all names of individuals are in proper name format (for example, first name, middle initial, if applicable, last name; **not as** Hillendale Farms or any business name)

- any race, ethnicity, and gender information entered on the Nomination Forms by the nominee is correctly entered or updated in the Service Center Information Management System (SCIMS).

B   Entering Ballot Information

The screens for entering the nominee and ballot information should be available on the COC Election Website accessible through the "FSA Applications" link on the FSA Intranet at **http://intranet.fsa.usda.gov/fsa/** on August 31, 2006.

All COC's that do not fall into 1 of the categories directly below shall enter their nominee and ballot information between August 31 and September 8.

Under the following specific conditions, COC's may have until September 20, 2006, to enter ballot information.

- COC's that did not receive any nominees may be delayed from entering their nominee and ballot data until a decision from the Secretary is received on how to proceed with the nomination process.

2   County Office Action (Continued)

B   Entering Ballot Information (Continued)

- COC's in targeted counties that did not receive any nominees, or that received no socially disadvantaged (SDA) nominees, may also be delayed from entering their nominee and ballot data until the Secretary's decision is received.

Notification will be sent through each State Office regarding the Secretary's decision as soon as possible.

County Offices shall ensure that the Sample Ballot and Transaction Completed Screens are printed and retained in COC election files. Carefully follow the instructions in this table through Step 12 to ensure that ballots will be received by voters for this election and that the ballots will be correct.

Important: If Steps 11 and 12 are not completed, there will be no ballots created or mailed to the voters for this election.

Enter ballot information according to this table. See Exhibit 1 for screen prints.

Step	Screen	Action
1	USDA eAuthentication and Authorization Warning Screen	PRESS "Continue".
2	eAuthentication Login	Enter eAuthentication user ID and password. PRESS "Enter" or "Login".
3	County FSA Committee Election	Select the desired County Office name from the dropdown box. PRESS "FSA County Committee Election".
4	Election Information	From the drop-down box, select the COC number and the LAA number for the current COC Election. PRESS "Submit". **Notes:** Verify LAA that is displayed at the top of the page in red is correct. If this information is not correct, update the COC Directory when it becomes available on the website. The application will **not** prevent the user from entering ballot information for a different LAA than what is displayed in the message. It is just telling the user which LAA is up for election according to what has been entered into the COC Directory. That can be corrected when the Directory again becomes available. Users may enter ballot information for as many LAA elections in their county as needed. If an **incorrect** LAA has been used since the beginning of the COC election process, exit the program, notify the State Office and prepare for a makeup election.

2   County Office Action (Continued)

B   Entering Ballot Information (Continued)

Step	Screen	Action
5	Office Mail Delivery	Enter the office mailing address where the return ballots will be mailed and PRESS "Submit". Ensure that the office name is entered on the first line, for example, "McNairy/Chester County FSA Office". **Notes:** If abbreviations are used in the street address, see 5-AS, Exhibit 8 for USPS common address abbreviations. The system will accept either 5- or 9-digit ZIP Codes. PRESS "Submit".
6	Voting Location if Voting in Person	Enter the office's physical location (street address) where an individual can hand deliver the ballots instead of returning by mail. Ensure that the office name is entered on the first line, for example, "McNairy/Chester FSA Office." PRESS "Submit".
7	Ballot Data	Enter the address of the physical location (street address) where the ballots will be counted. Ensure that the office name is entered on the first line, for example, "McNairy/Chester FSA Office". Enter the date and time the ballots will be counted. PRESS "Submit".
8	USDA Service Center Information Management System (SCIMS) Candidate Search Page	Enter any of the following: • candidate's ID number and ID type • full or partial last name • common name. PRESS "Search".
9	Search Results	A list of matches to the search data will be displayed. Select the nominee's name from the available list. **Note:** Users will only be able to select producers in the State and county where they have access through eAuthentication. Only producers in the correct COC/LAA with a check mark in the eligible to vote box in the Producer Election Data File, and coded as an individual in SCIMS will be saved into the Candidate Data Screen.
10	Candidate Data	When the name of an eligible producer who is coded as an individual in SCIMS is selected, the name will be displayed in "Candidate(s) Entered" box. If the selected producer is not in the correct COC/LAA, or not in SCIMS as an individual, the user will receive an error message and will be allowed to search again. For each nominee, PRESS "Search" and repeat steps 8 and 9 to select nominees until all have been entered in the box on the Candidate Data Screen. PRESS "Finish".

2   County Office Action (Continued)

B   Entering Ballot Information (Continued)

Step	Screen	Action
11	FSA County Committee Elections – COC Data	Confirm the data in each section of the sample ballot for accuracy. PRESS: • "Yes" in the option boxes if the information is correct • "No" if any of the information is incorrect. **Note:** If "No" was selected in any of the boxes, then the corresponding screen will be displayed after pressing "Submit", and changes can be made to the information. When all of the questions have been answered with "Yes", carefully review the entire ballot to confirm the information entered is correct. **Print the sample ballot for your records.** **After the "Sample Ballot" is printed, PRESS "Submit".** The information is **not** stored until "Submit" has been pressed after all of the questions are answered with "Yes". **Note:** **The information entered by the user on the "Sample Ballot" must be checked very carefully, as this is the information that will appear in the actual ballots. Any information that is incorrect on the sample ballot will be incorrect on the actual ballot. Ensure that the printout of the "Sample Ballot" is retained for COC records.**
12	Transaction Completed	The message, "Transaction Completed", will be displayed. The information that was entered is not stored until the Transaction Completed Message Screen is displayed. If this screen is not displayed, ballots for this election will **not** be created and mailed. Also, print this screen and retain with the sample ballot in the COC election records.

3   State Office Action

A   Action

Each State Office shall ensure that every county in their respective State has completed entering the nominee and ballot information, through oversight with County Offices as well as the following resources:
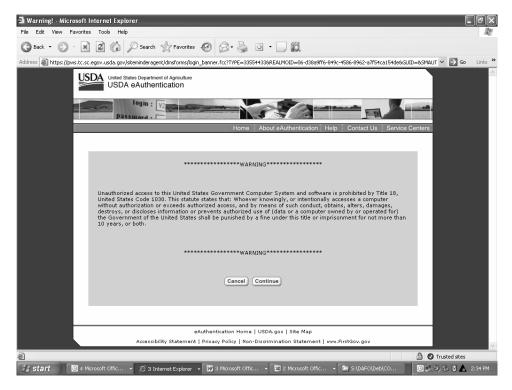
• the Candidate Report available on the COC State AO Reports website under "FSA Applications" at **http://intranet.fsa.usda.gov/fsa/**

• ballot data entered by County Offices on the COC Election Website may be reviewed on the website or by using screen prints faxed by County Offices to State Offices.

Note: Ensure that each county has successfully entered the ballot information by finding the county listed in the State's Candidate Report located on the COC State AO Reports website. Also ensure that each county has entered the total number of nominees they have received. A common cause of invalid elections occurs when counties fail to enter all nominees on the website or do not press "Submit" and save their ballot information in the website.
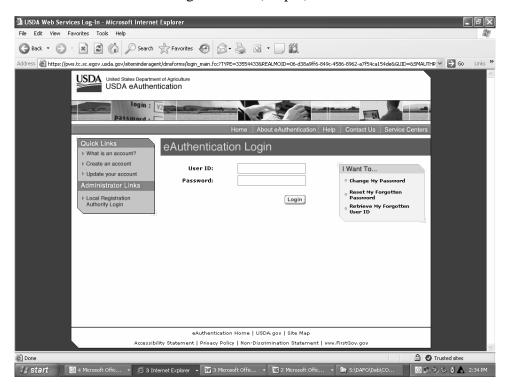
Ballot Information Screens

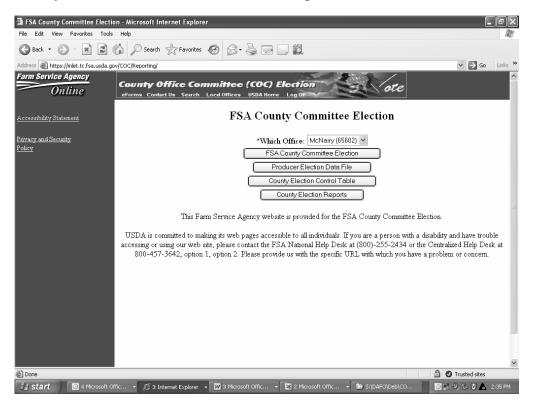Following are examples of the screens referenced in the table in subparagraph B.

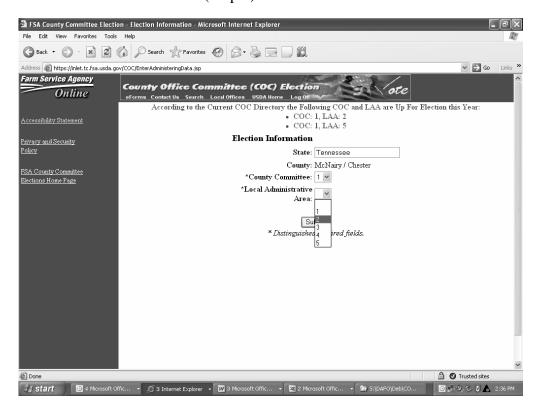USDA eAuthentication and Authorization Warning Screen (Step 1)

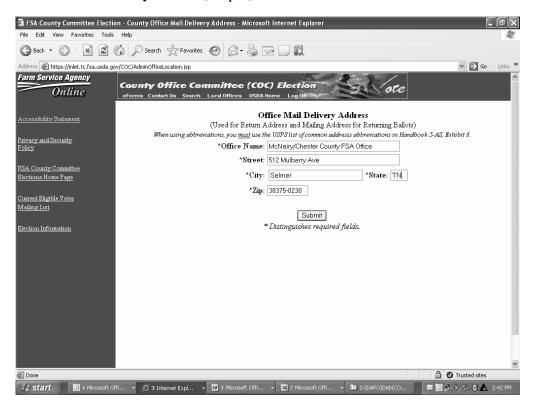USDA eAuthentication Login Screen (Step 2)

Ballot Information Screens (Continued)
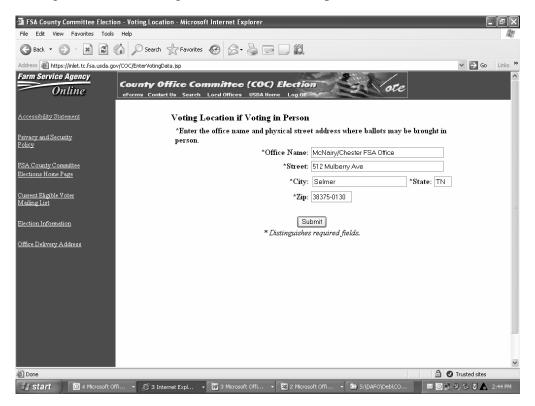
County FSA Committee Election Screen (Step 3)

Election Information Screen (Step 4)

Ballot Information Screens (Continued)

Office Mail Delivery Screen (Step 5)
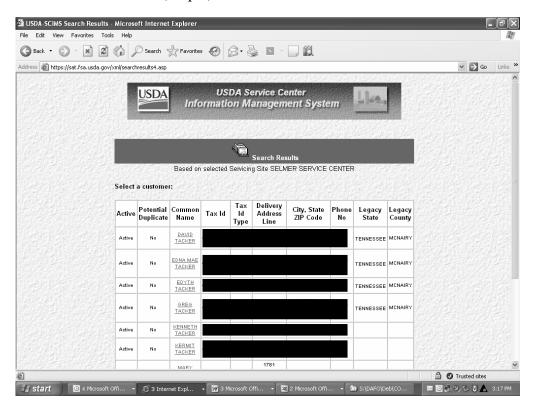

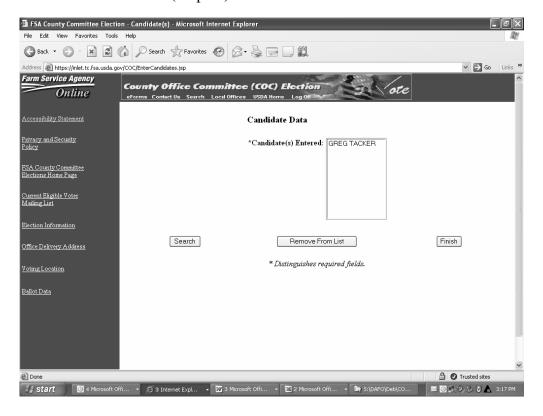Voting Location if Voting in Person Screen (Step 6)

Ballot Information Screens (Continued)

Ballot Data Screen (Step 7)

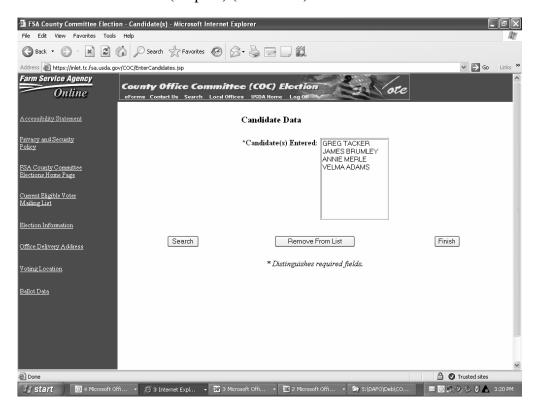USDA Service Center Information Management System (SCIMS) Candidate Search Page (Step 8)
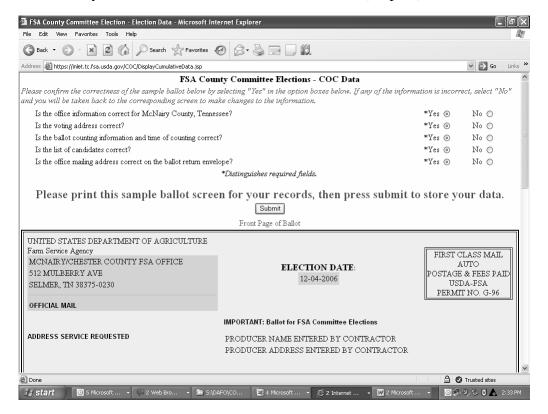
Ballot Information Screens (Continued)

Search Results Screen (Step 9)

Candidate Data Screen (Step 10)

Ballot Information Screens (Continued)

Candidate Data Screen (Step 10) (Continued)

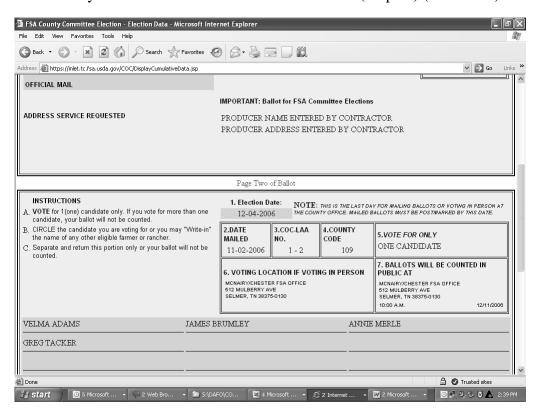FSA County Committee Election - COC Data Screen (Step 11)
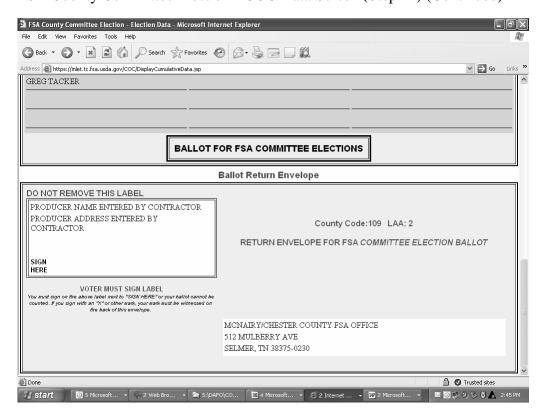
Ballot Information Screens (Continued)

FSA County Committee Election - COC Data Screen (Step 11) (Continued)

FSA County Committee Election - COC Data Screen (Step 11) (Continued)

Ballot Information Screens (Continued)

Transaction Completed Screen (Step 12)